Community Parks and Trails Strategy

The Regional District of Nanaimo is developing a community parks and trails strategy for the northern Electoral Areas which is scheduled to be completed in September, 2013. Community parks and trails are different than Regional parks and trails. Community parks and trails primarily serve the local neighborhood and community residents while the Regional parks and trails serve residents from the entire region and beyond. Community parks and
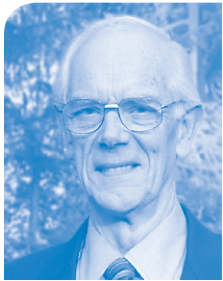
Director Joe Stanhope

trails are mostly created as a result of new development and are paid for through local taxes in each Electoral Area.

The purpose of this strategy is to provide specific direction about the acquisition, protection, development and management of local parks and trails. The goal is to have our Electoral Area develop its own vision and concept plan to provide clear direction in shaping the future of your community. The process will be overseen by an Advisory Committee with representation from the Electoral Area 'G' Parks and Open Space Advisory Committees and local First Nations.

An open house for Electoral Area 'G' is tentatively scheduled for May 22. For more information about the open house or the Community Parks and Trails Strategy, please contact the RDN Parks department at 250-248-3252.

Regional Growth Strategy Update

On November 22, 2011, the RDN Board adopted an updated Regional Growth Strategy following the completion of the second major review since the strategy was first adopted in 1997. The RGS represents a commitment by the RDN and its member municipalities to take a series of actions to improve the quality of life for present and future residents of the region. The goals set out in the RGS work towards achieving a collective vision of regional sustainability.

The *2012 Annual Report: Regional Growth Strategy Implementation and Progress* is now complete and is available on the RDN Website in the Long Range Planning Section. This report outlines the RGS-related projects and studies that the RDN has undertaken over the past year. These include the RDN's first-ever Agricultural Area Plan, a strategy and policy framework to guide agricultural-related decision making, the Cedar Main Street Design Project, which helps implement the RGS by supporting the development of a compact, mixed-use community within the Growth Containment Boundary in Electoral Area 'A', the Fairwinds Development Process ongoing in Electoral Area 'E', and the RDN economic development functions initiated in the northern and southern service areas.

The report also outlines several studies initiated as a result of the RGS, including the now-completed Alternative Forms of Rural Development Study and the Rural Village Centres Study, and the Industrial Land Supply and Demand Study which **>**

This flyer is intended for residents in RDN Electoral Area G. Overlapping postal routes could result in some adjacent electoral area residents receiving this newsletter. We hope you find the content of interest.

highlights

* **Community Parks and Trails Strategy**
* **Regional Growth Strategy Update**
* **Rural Village Centre Study**

is nearing completion. Updates are also provided on the RDN's relationships with other levels of government, including First Nations, and on commitments to service delivery in the areas of climate change and energy efficiency, transportation services, parks planning, recreation programs and facilities, emergency services and drinking water and watershed protection.

*For more information about the **2012 Annual Report: Regional Growth Strategy Implementation and Progress** please contact the RDN Long Range Planning Department at 250-390-6510 or 250-954-3798 (District 69).*

Rural Village Centre Study

The Rural Village Centre Study is now complete and was presented to the RDN Board of Directors in March. After receiving the study, the Board referred it to the RDN's Electoral Area Directors for further discussion.

This study fulfills a directive in the updated 2011 Regional Growth Strategy to identify Rural Village Centres with the greatest potential to evolve into complete, compact, mixed-use centres. It measures how close each of 15 study areas is to achieving performance levels that show progress towards being a complete, compact and mixed-use centre. This measurement is achieved by using criteria in three evaluation categories (community structure/design and land use; development and market viability; and water and sewage infrastructure).

While both the Regional Growth Strategy and the Official Community Plans for the study areas support higher density development in RVCs, it is clear from the study that most areas will not be able to develop into complete, compact communities without significant investment. Lack of service provision (water and sewer infrastructure), transit,

commercial and community amenities, and availability of relatively cheap land with development potential for single family residential outside of RVCs all play a role in limiting the successful development of some RVCs.

The RVC Study will not directly result in any land use changes. Its purpose is to enable the RDN Board to make informed decisions about future land use and infrastructure provision that impact local communities and the region as a whole. The study is intended as a tool to provide the RDN Board with a better understanding of the long-term implications of land use decisions on achieving the regional vision it has endorsed in both the Regional Growth Strategy and Board Strategic Plan.

If the RDN Board were to consider changes to Rural Village Centre boundaries in its Official Community Plans and in the RGS, this would require consultation opportunities for the residents in the whole region as well as specific electoral area communities.

Now that the RVC Study has been completed the RDN Board will reconsider a pending application for a new RVC at Deep Bay in Electoral Area 'H', within the context of the information provided by the study.

Affordable Housing

To make it easier to learn about the various types of housing resources within RDN municipalities and electoral areas, the RDN recently revamped the affordable housing section of its website by separating the webpage into housing categories. Visitors to the site can easily learn about housing for youth, seniors, renters and homeowners, as well as supportive housing and emergency shelter options, by clicking on photographs related to the topics. The site also includes information on incentives to create affordable housing, a

regional housing resource list, and a link to the Vancouver Island Crisis Society's Community Resource Database. This is an excellent resource for anyone needing to learn about the various housing options available in the Region.

Ideally, affordable, appropriate and adequate housing should be available for people of all abilities, incomes, lifestyles and household sizes. Achieving this goal requires an integrated, collaborative approach involving RDN member municipalities, non-profits working to address housing issues in the RDN, and other levels of government (Federal, Provincial and First Nations).

To view the affordable housing website, or to learn more about affordable housing in the RDN, visit **www. rdnhousing.ca**. These web pages are a work in progress and will be updated as new information and ideas come forward. The RDN's Long Range Planning Department will continue to coordinate with other agencies, including the Vancouver Island Crisis Society, the Society of Organized Services and the City of Nanaimo to ensure that residents have access to the most up-to-date information available.

House Number Visibility

To assist your local Volunteer Fire Department, the British Columbia Ambulance Service and RCMP, please make sure that your house number is clearly marked and visible from the roadside. This is an extremely important step to take in order to ensure that emergency responders can locate your property if you need help.

contacts

Electoral Area Director | Joe Stanhope
jstanhope@shaw.ca
Regional District of Nanaimo Website | www.rdn.bc.ca
250-390-4111   1-877-607-4111 (Toll-free access to all departments)

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO